FIVE SERMONS

ON THE

Following SUBJECTS;

VIZ.

I. AVARICE as inconsistent with Social Duty, as with True Religion.

II. The Great Importance and Wisdom of EARLY INDUSTRY.

III. The Nature and Character of ENVY.

IV. The true Nature of PRIDE; how foolish and ill-founded it is in all its Pretences.

V. On the same Subject.

BEING A

SUPPLEMENT

TO

Fifteen SERMONS

ON

SOCIAL DUTIES.

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DEAN of DOWN.

LONDON:
Printed for JOHN and JAMES RIVINGTON, at the *Bible* and *Crown* in *St. Paul's Church-yard.*

M.DCC.XLVII.

FIVE SERMONS

ON THE

Following SUBJECTS;

BRITISH MUSEUM

SERMON I.

PSALM X. ver. 3.

For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire; and blesseth the covetous, whom God abhorreth.

THIS psalm complains to GOD of the riotous oppression of wicked men, and declares the humble dependence of the righteous upon his providence and protection. But the question is, Why these oppressors and persecutors speak well of the covetous? The answer is very easy, Because they are the same persons.——Oppression is the effect of Avarice; for few men have ever arrived to such a degree of depravity, as to distress and injure others, out of wantonness and gayety of heart; that were a depravity more than deviliſh!——No, *the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire*; that is, he hath strong appe-

tites and paſſions eager to be gratified: and if this cannot be done without oppreſſion and invaſion of his neighbour's property, yet done it muſt be at any rate; and when it is done, it muſt be defended in the beſt manner he can. Now this defence cannot be drawn from any of the principles of reaſon and virtue (for theſe are all againſt him); and therefore he muſt carry it off with a high hand; *he boaſteth of his heart's deſire* —— Why ſhould not he conſult his own happineſs, and trample every thing under foot that ſtands in his way to it? As for his enemies, that is, all thoſe whom he hath made ſo by his oppreſſions, *he puffeth at them*, ſaith the pſalmiſt. He hath now arrived to a height of power that ſetteth him above their reſentments; and as for their grievances, he regardeth them not: the happineſs or miſery of others is nothing to him: ——he hath thrown off all ſenſe of humanity, and the next ſtep he takes, is to ſhake off his religion too: for ſoon after it followeth, *He hath ſaid in his heart, God hath forgotten; he hideth his face; he will never ſee it.*

Here we may obſerve the gradual progreſs of impiety in a wicked heart: Firſt, a man reſolves

reſolves to gratify his unruly appetites in all their demands: this cannot be done, without invading his neighbour's property. Then follow fraud and oppreſſion. After he hath rioted in his wickedneſs for ſome time with impunity, he then applauds his happineſs, and openly vaunteth his vices; *he boaſteth of his heart's deſire.* However, he hath yet ſome little remains of conſcience, and ſenſe of Divine vengeance hanging over him, and that he muſt get rid of as faſt as he can.

The compaſs of this diſcourſe will not allow me to purſue the progreſs of impiety through all its gradations; and therefore I ſhall confine myſelf to that ſingle point which is principally alluded to in that part of my text——*the covetous, whom God abhorreth.*

In ſpeaking to which words, I ſhall conſider them as intirely abſtracted from the occaſion of them in this pſalm, and only deduce this one point of plain doctrine from them--- "That covetouſneſs is a vice in a very particular manner abhorred and deteſted by Almighty GOD"——and that for theſe following reaſons:

I. Becauſe it is a vice directly oppoſite to the goodneſs of GOD.

II. Becauſe it is a vice very oppoſite to the Divine mercy. And,

III. Becauſe it is idolatry.

Firſt, I ſay, Covetouſneſs is a vice peculiarly abhorred of GOD, as being directly oppoſite to the Divine goodneſs: for covetouſneſs is an inordinate deſire of wealth; that is, an unreaſonable deſire both of acquiring and retaining it. Now the end of wealth, beyond all queſtion, is to ſerve the neceſſities and conveniencies of life, and, after that, to be a ſupply for charity and beneficence. Whereas, then, the covetous man is oftentimes ſo far from conſulting the convenience and well-being of other men, that it is very well if he ſupplies his own neceſſities, it is plain he acts in direct contradiction to the ends of wealth, and to all the purpoſes of the Divine goodneſs, in beſtowing the bleſſing of life upon mankind.

If we would form a right idea of the Divine goodneſs, we ſhould conſider Almighty GOD, as a Being of infinite perfection and felicity; full, and indefectible, completely happy in Himſelf, and, conſequently, incapable of any acceſſion of happineſs from any thing elſe. To conſider a Being ſo conſti-

tuted, creating a world, perhaps an infinity of worlds, and in them many infinities of creatures, to ſhare in his felicity; as if he could not be infinitely happy, unleſs that happineſs were infinitely diffuſed! how glorious, how amazing an idea of the Divine goodneſs is this! and yet how infinitely below the reality! Was man then created in his image? Was he impreſſed with a ſtrong inſtinct of univerſal love and good-will to all the world about him? Is this principle the characteriſtic of every thing that is great and good in life? Is it the nobleſt imitation and reſemblance of the Divinity? Nay, is it not almoſt the only remain of that glorious ſimilitude in which we were made? And is not the wretch, that centres all his regards in himſelf, and defaceth this divine impreſſion, this godlike form, from his ſoul; is not this wretch the moſt abject, the moſt worthleſs, of GOD's creatures? How is he fallen, and deformed beyond expreſſion! the very reverſe of GOD and goodneſs! And is it poſſible, that, in that abandoned condition, he can be other than the object of Divine deteſtation? *the covetous, whom God abhorreth.*

And as he is thus monſtrous in the ſight

of God, he is not leſs ſo in his relation to mankind: for, as the ſeveral ſtates and ſocieties of men are termed bodies politic, ſo, in truth, they bear a greater analogy to animate bodies than is commonly imagined. The governing part of ſociety may be conſidered as the heart, the principle of life and motion; from whence the blood is diffuſed, firſt, to the nobler vitals, and thence to the ſeveral limbs and parts of the body, in proportion to their bulk and uſe; in like manner as wealth is more immediately derived upon the nobler members of ſociety, and from thence to the miniſterial, and leſs noble; and as the blood was intended for the ſupport of the whole body, conſidered as ſuch, and not for the ſubſiſtence of any particular limb, otherwiſe than as that limb makes a part of the whole, and a proper conveyance to ſome other part below it; ſo wealth was never intended for any one, or any number of men in ſociety, how great or noble ſoever, but for the whole body politic. And altho' the principal members of the ſtate receive it by greater chanels, and in greater quantities, than their inferiors, as the arm receiveth greater quantities of blood,

and

and by larger arteries and veins, than any of the fingers; yet was that wealth never intended for their ſole uſe, any more than that blood was intended for the ſole uſe of the arm, without any regard to the fingers——Now, ſince this is exactly the caſe, let us conſider what would be the conſequence of any unnatural check in this circulation; for, if any part receive its nouriſhment in its proper proportion, and retain it unduly, muſt not ſome other part of neceſſity be defrauded? nay, perhaps, a great number of parts? and what will be the conſequence, even to that which retaineth more than it ought, but pain, and an unnatural tumour? and hath not this an evident tendency to render the whole body diſeaſed and monſtrous?

From hence we may gather how utterly unſocial this vice is! and how ruinous it muſt of neceſſity be to the public, if GOD, in his wrath, ſhould ſuffer it to become epidemical in any ſociety! becauſe, then, the members of that ſociety, inſtead of contributing to their mutual happineſs, by all the offices of humanity, and a fair commerce, muſt lay themſelves out to defraud and over-reach one another, by all the evil arts imaginable; and,

conſequently, muſt contribute, as much as in them lieth, to their mutual deſtruction*.

But, ſecondly, —— Covetouſneſs is a vice particularly deteſted by Almighty GOD, becauſe it is ſo very oppoſite to the Divine mercy. —— Now mercy is that attribute of the Almighty, which repreſenteth him compaſſionate of the miſeries and diſtreſſes of his creatures, and ready at all times to relieve them, when they call upon him: it is that attribute, which rendereth his infinite power and wiſdom peculiarly amiable to the ſons of men: it is that attribute, which he hath more fully and emphatically ſet forth in the Holy Scriptures, than any other; as if he delighted to be known by no other name than the GOD of mercy: and as he hath made it the great characteriſtic of his own nature, he hath alſo made it the ſtrong inſtinct, and the great ornament of ours, as well as the higheſt and moſt important duty in life: he hath bound it upon us by the ſtrongeſt engagements, and the ſevereſt penalties imaginable —— Nay, our bleſſed Saviour

* As was but too fatally found in the late pernicious *South-Sea* ſcheme.

Saviour Jeſus Chriſt hath gone ſo far, as to make it the ſum of all religion: and hath repreſented the day of judgment in ſuch a manner, as if the determination of our final ſtate intirely depended upon the diſcharge of this ſingle duty —— *Depart from me, ye curſed, into everlaſting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirſty, and ye gave me no drink; a ſtranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye cloathed me not; ſick, and in priſon, and ye viſited me not.* And, beſides all this, charity is a virtue ſo abſolutely neceſſary in this world, this vale of ſorrow and affliction, that one would think, if neither GOD nor reaſon injoined it, our very miſeries would force it upon us. Since, then, this virtue is of ſuch infinite importance, ſo neceſſary to the miſeries of this life, as well as to the felicities of the next; of ſuch near reſemblance to the mercy of GOD, and of ſuch peculiar acceptance with him; ſurely avarice, its great enemy, which ſhuts the eye, and ſtops the ear, and hardens the heart to the cries and complaints, and calamities, of our fellow-

fellow-creatures, muſt be, in a particular manner, deteſtable in his ſight.

And here I muſt obſerve, that that covetouſneſs which makes a man unjuſt, is a much worſe kind of covetouſneſs, than that which makes him only uncharitable. He that withholds his bounty or beneficence from me, is unjuſt to his Maker, and cruel to his own ſoul, as well as to me; but he that withholds my juſt right from me, or oppreſſeth me in the purſuit of it, is a villain and a robber; is, in the eye of GOD and juſtice, a much viler wretch than the robber upon the high road——he robs in the ſpirit of calm cruelty, from the fulneſs of pride, and the inſolence of power——Want and neceſſity carry their excuſe along with them; and therefore the poor robber is to be pitied, even when he is to be puniſhed; but the rich robber is altogether inexcuſable, is utterly deteſtable——And however their power and their numbers may protect them in this world (for GOD knows they are but too numerous), the time will come, when they will be the ſcorn and deriſion of men and angels: when even thoſe whom they now oppreſs, will have but too much reaſon to pity

pity them; when everlasting misery in another world shall be the reward of their cruelty and iniquity in this.

But, *thirdly*, the covetous are, in a particular manner, detestable in the sight of GOD, because they are idolaters. Thus the apostle, in the 5th chapter of his epistle to the *Ephesians*, at the 5th verse——*This ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.* And again, in the 3d chapter to the *Colossians*, at the 5th verse, *Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affections, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry*—— and that it is so, is plain; because the very essence of worship consists in serving and confiding in the object of our worship: for all the external acts of devotion are only so many proper indications of trust and obedience, and are ultimately referred to them: now it is certain, that the covetous man both confides in his mammon, and serves him with all his heart and soul. The first of these is plainly implied in the 31st chapter of *Job*, at the

24th

24th and 28th verſes; where that righteous man, freeing himſelf from the imputation of avarice, acknowlegeth, among other ſuppoſitions, that if he had put his truſt in his wealth, he might juſtly be charged with idolatry; *If* (ſaith he, ver. 24th) *I have made gold my hope, or have ſaid to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence*, &c. *this alſo were an iniquity; for I ſhould have denied the God that is above.* The ſame thing is evident from the rich man's conduct in the parable, who enlarged his barns, and laid up goods for many years; for when he had done ſo, he ſaid to his ſoul, *Soul, take thine eaſe, eat, drink, and be merry.* Here is not one word of gratitude to GOD, for the bleſſings beſtow'd; or dependence upon him, for the continuance of them: for, when he had treaſured up an immenſe fortune, he then thought he had a ſure fund of felicity; and in that confidence he placed all his hopes and happineſs, and looked no farther. The young man in the goſpel is alſo a ſad inſtance to the ſame purpoſe; who choſe rather to leave Chriſt, than to part with his large poſſeſſions: and ſuch alſo was *Demas*; who forſook

forſook the apoſtles, and renounced Chriſtianity, *to cleave to this preſent world.*

Beſides, it is evident, from the nature of the thing, that the covetous man is the ſlave of his avarice, and not the ſervant of GOD: for GOD commandeth him *to do good after his ability*; but avarice forbiddeth him to do any good, and that he obeyeth: GOD commandeth him neither to injure or oppreſs his neighbour; his covetouſneſs commandeth him to do both, where he hath power to ſupport him in his villainy; and he doth both: GOD commandeth him to *give alms of his wealth, and never to turn away his face from any poor man*; but his avarice commandeth him to ſhut his hand, and to turn away his eyes; and he doth ſo: GOD commandeth him to *lay up treaſures in heaven*; and not to lay up treaſures on earth, *where moth and ruſt do corrupt, and where thieves break through and ſteal*; his avarice commandeth him to do juſt the contrary; and he obeyeth it religiouſly. Is not then the covetous man an idolater to all intents and purpoſes? Nay, he is the worſt kind of idolater in the whole world; becauſe his devotion is not ſo much as ultimately referred to GOD, but is in direct

rect contradiction to the Divine worſhip in every part of it; whereas almoſt all other idolatries are aimed, at leaſt, and intended, to GOD, and injoin ſome kind of obedience to Him. It is no wonder then, that covetouſneſs ſhould be a vice ſo peculiarly abhorred of GOD, ſince it is ſo directly deſtructive of all religion, and ſince it is utterly impoſſible to *ſerve God and Mammon* at the ſame time.

And thus having ſhewn you the reaſons why covetouſneſs is ſo peculiarly abhorred of GOD, I now proceed to make ſome obſervations upon the folly and danger of this vice.

The deſire of wealth is, beyond all queſtion, rightly and wiſely founded in our nature; becauſe it is neceſſary, in order to a competent proviſion of the conveniencies of life: and it is appointed to grow with our years; becauſe, as age and infirmities come on, which diſable us from the activity and induſtry of our youth, ſuch a proviſion is more neceſſary to ſupport the wants and weakneſs of old age, and to provide for an helpleſs iſſue: but, when that proviſion is not wanted, or is already made, is ſufficiently and abundantly made; to provide endleſly,

and

and without any rational proſpect, to toil and ſlave to no purpoſe that can be named, is ſurely one of the greateſt inſtances of infatuation that can well be imagined; but indeed it ought to be conſidered more in the light of a juſt curſe, than a high degree of folly: that thoſe wretches, who have taken off their dependence from Almighty GOD, and put their confidence in their riches, ſhould find their miſery and their plague in thoſe very things wherein they vainly fixed their happineſs. And what rendereth this evil yet worſe, is, that it is without remedy: For, as *Ariſtotle* rightly obſerves, prodigality may be cured, either by precept or by want; but avarice is incurable; becauſe age and infirmities increaſe it: and this is ſo peculiarly the vice of old-age, that in youth it is perfectly monſtrous! Young people ſhould be beneficent, to be agreeable: to endear them to mankind, and recommend them to ſuch friendſhips and aſſiſtances in life, as may help them in their ſeveral purſuits and proſpects: and therefore, if this vice be indulged in that ſeaſon, the conſequence is, that it checks the progreſs of every thing that is great and excellent in our nature; and it is impoſſible

to ſay to what extravagances of folly and madneſs it carrieth its wretched votaries, before the laſt period of life, in the ordinary courſe; unleſs, by good fortune, it happen to ſtarve them in the way.

Good God! what a lamentable proſpect is it to contemplate upon the folly and miſery of mankind in this point! to ſee a parcel of groveling wretches given up to endleſs anxiety and deluſion; ſacrificing all the enjoyments of life, their health and happineſs—nay, perhaps their very lives and ſouls, for a poor pittance of glittering duſt, that hath no value but in the uſe; and yet is never intended to be uſed: for a covetous man always overlooks the end, and fixeth upon the means: nay, he dreads the enjoyment of his fortune, as much as he doth the loſs of it; and, indeed, to him they are the ſame thing. Now this deſire is plainly againſt reaſon and nature, and therefore 'tis inſatiable. Every deſire that is natural is eaſily ſatisfied; becauſe it is limited, and hath proper objects ſuited to it. Thus, if a man be hungry, he will be ſatisfied when he hath eaten a good meal; and his hunger is, for ſome time after, no more than if it had never been:

and

and if he eat more than nature requires, he is loaded and oppreſſed: ſo likewiſe if he be thirſty, ſuch a proportion of drink as nature demands will quench and allay that thirſt, and then he is at reſt.---- It is plain therefore, that covetouſneſs is not a deſire of nature, but a diſeaſe: it is the thirſt of a dropſy; the more it drinks, the more it deſires, and the more it is inflamed. A covetous man may indeed imagine, that ſuch a certain ſum or portion of wealth will ſatisfy his deſires, and make him ſit down happy and contented; but, alas! he is deceived; for, as *Solomon* finely obſerveth, *he that loveth ſilver, ſhall not be ſatisfied with ſilver; nor he that loveth abundance, with increaſe.* And the reaſon is evident; for, if a man ſet his heart and affections upon one talent which he hath no need of, and think he would be happy to attain it, it is plain, from the nature of the thing, that he muſt think two talents would make him twice as happy, and three talents thrice as happy, and ſo on to infinity. ----And therefore it is plain, a covetous man's love of money always muſt be in proportion to the quantity: if he love an hundred pounds well, for its own ſake, he muſt love two hundred

twice as well, and ſo on.——Hence it is, that the deſires of the covetous always increaſe with their eſtate; and every day they grow richer, they diſcover new wants, and new neceſſities: and a new purchaſe, which a covetous man hath ſet his heart upon, is, to him, as real a want as any in nature; nay, perhaps, a much more craving and painful one, as falſe appetites are more violent and inſatiable. And what is moſt lamentable, is (as I before obſerved), that this deſire groweth with his years, when it cannot poſſibly have any meaning, or any end: to ſee men, whoſe income is double their expence, nay, perhaps, ten times more, and that income as long as their lives; perhaps, too, childleſs, and in the decline of life; without heir, nay, without any relation they can think themſelves in conſcience obliged to make a fortune for; to ſee ſuch creatures anxious of gain, as if their daily bread depended upon it —— *There is* (ſaith *Solomon*, in the 4th chapter of his *Eccleſ.* verſe 8.) *one alone, and there is not a ſecond, yea, he hath neither child or brother; yet there is no end of all his labour; neither is his eye ſatisfied with riches; neither ſaith he, For whom do I labour,*

labour, and bereave my ſoul of good? This alſo is vanity; yea, it is a ſore travail.

If men of this character have any remains of religion, they generally ſupport themſelves under this ſtupid conduct, by reſolutions of bequeathing ſome part of their ſubſtance to pious or public uſes at their death; and yet, if they have any degree of right reflection, they cannot but ſee this to be a ſenſeleſs ſubterfuge: we give to GOD, when we have no one elſe to give to, that hath any kind of rational claim to the fruits of our labours; we return to GOD ſome part of what we derived from his bounty; but we take care to let him ſee we are as ungrateful as we poſſibly can; for we pay nothing as long as ever we can with-hold it from him, and, at length, out of our great generoſity, we give him the preference of what we cannot keep, and do not know how elſe to diſpoſe of. A deathbed-charity is nearly upon the ſame foot of merit with a deathbed repentance; the miſer parts with his money, as the ſinner doth with his ſins; becauſe he can keep them no longer. Can any thing be more abſurd, or more unmeriting at the hand of GOD, than ſuch a benefaction? And yet, ſuch as it is, it

is by much the wiſeſt and moſt rational part of the miſer's conduct. One great cauſe of their folly in this reſpect is this: they imagine their power, and the reſpect they meet with in the world, dependeth upon their wealth, and muſt diminiſh with it; and they are certainly right in thinking ſo, as long as they have no other claim to the eſteem or regard of mankind: God, in his juſt judgment, hideth from ſuch wretches, the glory, the honour, the veneration, that attend upon beneficence: he hideth from them that inexpreſſible complacency and gladneſs of heart that reſults from conſcious virtue, from the diſcharge of duty, from the relief of diſtreſs, and, above all, from the propagation of piety and virtue, and happineſs all around them. How glorious an employment is it to be, in the beſt ſenſe of the word, one's own executor in the management of a plentiful fortune, for the good of mankind, and glory of God! to put it out of the power of chance, or fraud, or law, to ſuppreſs or counterfeit your will, or defeat your good intentions, for the ſervice of religion, and the felicity of your fellow-creatures! This were a kind of heaven upon earth; this

were

were indeed a glorious and a godlike uſe of wealth! but it is a glory the groveling wretches of the earth are unworthy of: and therefore GOD giveth them over to the deluſions of their narrow hearts, to be blind, as they are hardened; to live unloved, and die deſpiſed; to be without eſteem here, and without heaven hereafter.

In the laſt place, to paſs by all that train of evils which covetouſneſs almoſt neceſſarily draweth after it, ſuch as pride, cruelty, oppreſſion, and injuſtice; and ſuppoſe we had no account to give for the getting of a great eſtate; yet have we not an account to render for the uſing of it? Doth GOD give us our poſſeſſions in property, or in truſt only? Confeſſedly in truſt: and, if ſo, muſt not our accounts be in proportion to our income? Let a man's eſtate be called what it will among men, is he, in the ſight of GOD, proprietor of any more than ſerveth the neceſſities and conveniencies of life, and a proper proviſion for a family? that is, ſuch a proviſion as is competent to the condition of life we are in? And, as for the overplus, is he not ſteward to the Almighty? And muſt he not one day render him a ſevere account? And can there

be a more flagrant madneſs than to be ſolicitous only to increaſe our income, that is, how to inflame our accounts? whereas, in all reaſon, our concern ought to be how to clear them, by laying out what we receive according to the truſt repoſed in us. And therefore, my brethren, how much we receive of the good things of this world, let that be at the will of our Maſter; but be it our concern to diſburſe them as we ought—Surely then, in this reflection, we ſhould be ſo far from deſiring to be immenſely rich, or envying the condition of thoſe that are ſo, that, even if no trouble attended the attainment of wealth, nor anxiety the keeping of it, nor vexation the loſs; we ſhould rather envy the ſafety and the ſecurity of thoſe who are not tempted with ſuch dangerous bleſſings, but are happily delivered by Almighty GOD, from the heavy account of a great eſtate, and the curſe of a covetous mind.

If we muſt deſire without bounds, let us apply to proper objects: unbounded deſires ſhould have objects that are ſo too. Let us then turn our whole hearts to thoſe manſions of bliſs, where only there is fulneſs of joy, fulneſs without ſatiety, joy without allay! and

and abundance without avarice! Poſſeſſions equally unenvied, unfading, and undiſturbed! *There the weary be at reſt, and there the wicked ceaſe from troubling; they hear not the voice of the oppreſſor.* There, where all will enjoy all, and the power and plenty, and pre-eminence of others, will be new funds of mutual and perpetual felicity! In one word, where our utmoſt hopes and expectations cannot poſſibly be diſappointed, but by being infinitely exceeded.

To which manſions of conſummate and unenvied felicity, GOD of his infinite mercy conduct us all, through the merits and mediation of JESUS CHRIST.

and abundance without avarice! Possessions equally unenvied, unfading, and undisturbed! *There the weary be at rest, and there the wicked cease from trembling; they hear not the voice of the oppressor.* There, where all will enjoy all, and the power and [illegible], and pre-eminence of others, will be now funds of mutual and perpetual felicity. In one word, where our utmost hopes and expectations cannot possibly be disappointed, but by being infinitely exceeded.

To which mansions of consummate and unenvied felicity, God of his infinite mercy conduct us all, through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ.

THE
Great IMPORTANCE and WISDOM
OF
EARLY INDUSTRY.

Preached before the

UNIVERSITY,

IN THE

Cathedral Church of St. PATRICK's, *Dublin*,
in the Year 1720.

THE

EARLY INDUSTRIES

OF

UNITARIANISM

IN THE

United States of America

In the Year 1750.

SERMON II.

PROV. VI. ver. 6, 7, 8.

Ver. 6. *Go to the ant, thou ſluggard, conſider her ways, and be wiſe.*---- 7. *Which having no guide, overſeer or ruler;*---- 8. *Provideth her meat in the ſummer, and gathereth her food in the harveſt.*

IT is obſervable of *Solomon*, that as he is every where throughout his writings zealous in the praiſe of Induſtry, ſo he is no leſs ſevere in the reproach of idleneſs: and yet at the ſame time that his indignation is raiſed againſt the ſluggard, he ſeems more at a loſs how to inſtruct and reform that unhappy race of mortals, than any other whatſoever: men of every other character were capable of improvement from application and Induſtry: But what could be expected from thoſe who were

were too lazy to put any precepts into practice, however useful and wise? Had he referred them for instruction to the schools of philosophy, many precepts must be learned, and many books turned over; and they must have resolved upon a regular course of study and discipline, before they could attain those habits, and that wisdom they wanted; and this he knew would be death to them, even to think of: and therefore the shortest method he could take with them, and indeed the shortest course that could possibly be taken for their amendment, was to remit them for instruction to the ant: where they needed only to look and learn; where, stretched at length by the side of a sunny bank (as proper a situation for sloth as their hearts could wish) they might see all the surprising effects of Industry, and learn all the fruits and advantages of it, at their ease, without stirring from the spot, without the expence either of toil or study, and, in short, without any other labour than that of keeping their eyes open.

Here, might they behold a little creature labouring under a load of more than four times its own bulk, and conveying it with incessant Industry to the common store; and

if

if he fainted, and grew unequal to the task, he might ſoon have the pleaſure to ſee a good-natured neighbour haſtening to his aſſiſtance; the loaded ants going in one way, and the unloaded going out another, that they might not obſtruct one another in their paſſage.

In the courſe of a few days loitering, he might obſerve the common ſtock of proviſion immenſely increaſed: and, what muſt be a contemplation of great pleaſure to ſuch a genius, he might obſerve, that the labours of the year ended with the harveſt; that, when they had no more to gather, they had no more to do, but to ſit down and enjoy what they had got: that they had provided convenient coverings for themſelves, and granaries for their food, and were under no neceſſity of ſuffering the ſeverities of the winter-ſeaſon, but were warmly lodged in the midſt of peace and plenty; and never need put their foot out of doors, unleſs, perhaps, to ſun themſelves, or their proviſions, after a glut of rain: which were no more than a pleaſant recreation after ſo long confinement. And, laſtly, he could not but obſerve, with conſcious ſhame, that he never met with one idler in the whole community;

that

that every individual contributed ſomething to the public fund; and beſt conſulted his own good, by co-operating for the good of the whole.

When the ſluggard had obſerved all this at his eaſe, one would think it would not be very hard for him to turn it into an uſeful leſſon of life; and to reaſon thus ſhortly and pertinently upon it--I alſo am a member of ſociety, and ſhould I be utterly inſignificant in it? Was I made to be leſs important than an ant? or, Am I leſs bound to contribute to the good of the community? Is not my own inſeparable from it? and ſhall I not co-operate for the common good? Every ſociety hath a fund of wealth, beſt acquired by honeſt arts: from whence alſo ariſe the other national funds of power, credit, and eſteem: Should I be inſignificant to all theſe purpoſes? and can I be happy and honourable, if I be?

Let me reflect, if I alſo can have reſolution and induſtry enough to labour out my ſeaſon, like the ant, I ſhall not only contribute to the public good, but ſhall alſo, probably, be able to get myſelf a comfortable proviſion for life.---Life alſo hath its ſeaſons, like the year: the time of health and ſtrength

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are its ſummer, and its autumn: if I employ theſe, as I ought, in ſome uſeful and honeſt purſuit, I ſhall, in all probability, have acquired wherewithal to ſupport me in the winter of life, when the ſeaſon of labour is over, and when eaſe and reſt will be very agreeable and deſirable to me: How infinitely happy ſhall I be, if I can live to ſee the day when I ſhall have nothing to do but to eat and drink, and take my reſt!

And here we ſee the exceeding wiſdom of *Solomon*'s propoſing the ant to the imitation of idlers, becauſe it is an example that ſhould excite them to induſtry, even for the intereſt of their ſloth; foraſmuch as it inſtructs us, that a ſhort courſe of unwearied induſtry is the ſureſt means to purchaſe a long vacation of eaſe, and uninterrupted reſt.

It is not barely upon this principle, but upon others of more moment, that I ſhall endeavour to illuſtrate the wiſdom of early induſtry (the moſt important of all ſocial duties) to this audience; and when the wiſdom of this virtue hath ſufficiently recommended it to you, I hope you will need no other motive to engage you in an earneſt purſuit and practice of it.

The importance of this virtue to the public needs no proof; forasmuch as it is self-evident, that no man can be an useful member of society, who doth not, some way or other, contribute either to its peace, honour, security, or interest: and how this can be done, without a proper exercise and improvement either of the powers of his body, or mind, or both, in some useful pursuit, is utterly inconceivable. And therefore I shall content myself with shewing the advantage of industry to every man in his private capacity.

And, *first*, Industry is wise with regard to the interests and concerns of the body: we were made for labour, and a certain portion of exercise is absolutely necessary to our health and strength; and the body can no more be preserved in vigour without it, than without its natural food. What the condition of our constitution in paradise might be, is not easy to say: but it is evident, that from the moment man was driven from that delightful seat, and condemned to support his life by the sweat of his brow, labour is become necessary to our well-being: and tho' it was pronounced upon *Adam* as

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a curſe, and in puniſhment of his tranſgreſſion: yet, whether it were to manifeſt the continuance of that curſe upon his poſterity, or rather, in the uſual courſe of the Divine mercy, to turn curſes into bleſſings, to ſuch as patiently ſubmit to his chaſtenings, and make a right uſe of them; thus much is certain, that we are doomed to labour from that day to this! GOD and nature demand it of us; and if we cannot be happy with it, we muſt be miſerable without it.

As our conſtitutions are now mortal and corruptible, it is evident, that, in ſome part or other of them, we die daily: and when thoſe periſhing parts become uſeleſs to the ſtrength and vigour of the body, they are a load and incumbrance to it; and if not thrown off by exerciſe, or otherwiſe, become matter of diſeaſe and infirmity to us; and when they grow ſo numerous as to corrupt the maſs of blood, if we have not ſtrength enough to throw them off in the diſcharges of gouts and fevers, we muſt ſink and die under them.

Now, the true and natural way of getting rid of theſe noxious humours, is, by exerting the body in ſome uſeful labour, by which

its health and ſtrength may be preſerved and improved; and, when the body is in vigour, the labours of life will rather be a pleaſure, than a toil to it; for the body finds as ſtrong and natural a pleaſure in employing its powers to their proper ends, as the mind does in the purſuit of truth, or in the employment of any of its faculties to their proper ends. And, on the other hand, a ſtate of idleneſs and inactivity is as naturally irkſome to a man in full health, when the buſineſs of life calls for his ſtrength and induſtry, as it is to a generous ſteed to be reined in, when he is drawn out to the courſe.-----The perfection and happineſs of every being, and every thing in this world, conſiſts in the right application and exertion of their powers to the true ends and purpoſes for which they were ordained; and whenever they are diverted from thoſe ends, or applied to other purpoſes, they become uſeleſs and unhappy. ---If the body be not employed, it becomes bloated, languid, and enervate: ſloth ſeizes it at firſt, and all the infirmities of life purſue ſloth; and then the languid pleaſures of inactivity are followed by the ſharp pains of ſlow and racking diſtempers: whereas labour,

bour, as it is the ſure pledge of health, ſo is it the ſure ſource of all thoſe pleaſures that reſult from it: nay, experience teaches us, that the ſpirits are raiſed by exerciſe into a more conſtant chearfulneſs and vivacity, than can be ſupplied even by the moſt generous wines: nay, there is a pleaſure even in the wearineſs that ſucceeds temperate exerciſe, which far excels all the enjoyments of ſloth: and if the labours, and even the languors, of induſtry be agreeable, ſurely the refreſhments of it muſt be doubly delightful. It was St. *Paul's* rule, that *if any would not work, neither ſhould they eat*. And this is not only morally juſt and righteous, but it is naturally ſo.--- The end of food is to ſupply the waſtes of the body from labour; therefore if men will not labour, neither ſhould they eat; and if they will eat, yet they had better not: for they muſt do it without appetite, and without pleaſure: and, after all, when they have taken in their food, it will turn more into diſeaſe than digeſtion. This is the true ſtate and ſettled rule of life; but there are exceptions to this rule: there are who live only to eat; whereas labour, as it is intitled to refreſhment, ſo it is intitled to health and

happineſs from that refreſhment. What an exquiſite reliſh does it give to the plaineſt and coarſeſt food! and what ſoftneſs even to a pillow of ſtone! *The ſleep of a labouring man is ſweet*, ſays *Solomon*; whereas the very reſt and eaſe of the ſlothful is a burden to him: for it is certain, that as men may eat till the moſt delicious foods loſe all their reliſh, ſo they may reſt till feathers loſe all their ſoftneſs, till pillows and beds of down can ſupply them with no one eaſy ſpot whereon to recline their languid head; and if they chance to doze in that uneaſy condition, that ſleep, which is a refreſhment to a body wearied with labour, can be only an additional grievance to a body that is wearied with reſt.

But this is not all; for as induſtry procures a ſtock of chearful health, without which the good things of this life cannot be enjoyed, ſo is it naturally fitted to procure a fund of good things for the enjoyment of life; for all theſe are the purchaſe of induſtry, as the want of them is the puniſhment of ſloth.--*He becometh poor*, ſays the wiſe man, *that dealeth with a ſlack hand, but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.*

rich.--- And again: *The hand of the diligent ſhall bear rule, but the ſlothful ſhall be under tribute.*--- *The ſoul of the ſluggard deſireth, and hath nothing; but the ſoul of the diligent ſhall be made fat.*--- *The drunkard and the glutton ſhall come to poverty, and drowſineſs ſhall clothe a man with rags.* And therefore, whoever deſires to lay up a ſufficient ſtore of the good things of this life, for the conſolation and ſupport of his old age, let him take care to employ his youth in an honeſt induſtry; for this is the only ſure means of procuring thoſe bleſſings.--- And if he fails to do this, let him reſt aſſured, that, in the decline of life, he will be purſued by two of the cruelſt evils in life, remorſe and poverty! fruitleſs remorſe, and unpity'd poverty: whereas the diligent ſhall not only have wherewithal to ſupply his own wants, but to relieve the wants of others. *The ſlothful* (as *Solomon* expreſſes it) *coveteth greedily all the day long; but the righteous* (i. e. he that exerteth an honeſt induſtry) *giveth, and ſpareth not.* The man that hath raiſed himſelf by an honeſt induſtry, *giveth, and ſpareth not*; knowing, that, as to the wealth and affluence of this world, *there is no good*

in them, but for a man to rejoice and do good in his life; and that every man ſhould eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour: this is the gift of GOD.--- And therefore, as far as pleaſure is preferable to pain, and health to diſeaſe; as far as ſprightlineſs exceeds ſtupidity, and ſound ſleep, diſturbed dreams; as far as freedom is preferable to ſervitude, and dominion to dependence; as far as plenty, and a power of doing good, ſurpaſs pining deſire, and pinching poverty; ſo far is induſtry wiſer and better than ſloth, even with regard to the concerns of the body.

But, 2*dly*, Induſtry is wiſe, with regard to the intereſt of the ſoul. —— Virtue and knowlege are to the ſoul, what health and ſtrength are to the body; the ſame induſtry is equally perfective and uſeful, and the ſame indolence equally ruinous and deſtructive, to both: the ſame ſloth, that brings diſeaſes upon the body, brings vices and evil affections upon the ſoul —— *I went by the field of the ſlothful*, ſays *Solomon, and by the vineyard of the man void of underſtanding: and, lo! it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles*

nettles had covered the face thereof: and the ſtone wall thereof was broken down. The field and vineyard of the ſlothful are exact emblems of his mind: inſtead of grapes and olives, inſtead of the nobleſt fruits of culture and ſtudy, it is over-run with thorns and nettles, and evil weeds of every kind; with noxious vices, with perverſe appetites, and vexatious humours, that tear, and ſting, and are equally vexatious to himſelf, and all around him, without any more diſtinction than the briers and nettles of his vineyard make between their owner and any one elſe that walks thro' them: nay, not only ſo, but its *wall is broken down*, its fence of virtue and knowlege is in ruins; nor has it any thing to defend it from the intruſion and devaſtation of vice; it is now an open prey to every invader.

Plato tells us, that induſtry is as much preferable to idleneſs, as brightneſs is to ruſt; plainly implying, that idleneſs is to the mind what ruſt is to metals; and in truth it is ſo: it does not only tarniſh its luſtre, and make it unfit for uſe, but it alſo eats into it. The mind was formed for exerciſe as well as the body; and, if it be unemployed, it will

not only grow rusty and dull, but it will also prey upon itself. And tho' it should not degenerate altogether into the condition of the sluggard's vineyard, tho' it should not fall into all the ruin and devastation of vice; yet will it never want thorns and nettles, it will never want sufficient supplies of spleen, and evil appetites, to punish the neglect of honest pursuits, and useful attainments.—— *The desire of the slothful killeth him,* says *Solomon*; *for his hands refuse to labour.*—— And sure it must be a state of miserable torment, passionately to desire what we see we shall not enjoy, and cannot be at the pains to procure: and it is obvious to observe in the world numbers of men repining to death every day, at the advancement of others to honour and eminence from the improvement of those abilities which were naturally, perhaps, inferior to their own: and yet all this is but the just and natural reward of honest industry, in proof of that excellent observation of the wise man, in 22d chap. of his *Proverbs*, 29th verse. *Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings*; *he shall not stand before mean men.*

Again,

Again, Induſtry is yet farther wiſe with regard to the concerns of the ſoul, becauſe a proper improvement in knowlege is neceſſary to all conditions in life.——Every man does not need to be a merchant, or a mechanic; but every man ſhould be a man of knowlege, and, if poſſible, a man of learning, at leaſt, in his own profeſſion.——For this reaſon the antients, tho' they had but one *Ceres*, and one *Vulcan*, one deity that preſided over the labours of the hammer, and the plough; yet had they nine *Muſes*, becauſe their aid was uſeful to men of every character and condition in life. Learning is an acceſſion of new light, and new knowlege; and new light, and new knowlege, will always be uſeful to inform and guide us to more advantage in every purſuit; and there is ſcarcely any art ſo mean and mechanic, to which learning might not be both ornamental and uſeful: there is ſcarcely one profeſſion in the world, where a right application of knowlege would not carry us to uncommon degrees of eminence. And if learning be thus honourable in every other profeſſion, ſurely where it is itſelf the principal, if not the ſole profeſſion, the want of it

muſt

muſt be infinitely reproachful! and yet there is no medium, men muſt either want it, or take pains to attain it: and hence it is that *Minerva*, the goddeſs of wiſdom, among the antients, had the epithet of Εργατης, or *the worker*, given her, to ſhew that none butthe induſtrious were intitled to her aſſiſtance.

Now, as wealth is to be acquired in youth, for the ſupport of age, ſo is knowlege alſo with more reaſon:

1*ſt*, Becauſe it is an higher and nobler attainment. And, 2*dly*, Becauſe age, which for the moſt part adds to our wealth, from the acceſſion of avarice, and the retrenchment of the expenſive paſſions, takes away from our knowlege, by impairing the powers of the mind; and that, when we want it moſt both for our own credit, and the inſtruction of others: and therefore we ſhould take care to be plentifully provided. *Wiſe men*, ſaith *Solomon*, *lay up knowlege*-----well knowing it is the nobleſt and moſt valuable treaſure they can poſſibly lay up: and if, as the ſame wiſe man obſerves, *the grey head is the beauty of old men*, it is beyond all doubt, that wiſdom is the glory of the grey head.

head.---- *O! how comely a thing is judgment for grey hairs!* (ſays the wiſe Son of *Sirach*)! *and for antient men to know counſel! O! how comely is the wiſdom of old men, and underſtanding and counſel to men of honour!* Ecclus. xxv. 4, 5. And therefore, as knowledge is better than ignorance, and virtue than vice; as far as culture exceeds wildneſs and barbarity, and brightneſs excels ruſt;--- as light is more lovely than darkneſs, and counſel more becoming the grey head than uninformed dotage; ſo far is diligence wiſer and better, and more valuable, than idleneſs, with regard even to the temporal intereſts of the ſoul.

In the *laſt* place, If diligence be wiſe with regard to the temporal concerns of the ſoul, it muſt ſurely be much more ſo with regard to its eternal intereſt. There are many purſuits that are proper and ornamental in life; there are many of high concern; but there is one only of infinite importance: there are many of excellent uſe; but there is one only of abſolute neceſſity: and happy, beyond all compariſon, wiſe and happy, are they who have early *choſen that better part.*——*The*

fear of the Lord, says *Solomon*, *is the beginning of wisdom*. And it is observeable, that the *Hebrew* word here interpreted *the beginning*, signifies either the foundation or the top of any thing; and in the present application of it, it is strictly true in either sense: the fear of the LORD is the foundation and the top of all wisdom. That early and prudent caution, which is the parent and the companion of true wisdom, best enters into the mind, and dwells there, from an awe of religion, from the sense of an infinitely wise and powerful Being always present to every motion in our mind, and every action of our lives; and there is not a thought in our heart that is hid from him: and as this is the best principle of that caution and consideration which should conduct our lives; so is the end it aims at, at once the wisest and the noblest pursuit of reasonable beings: if it be wise to lay up early *treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and thieves break through and steal*; is it not infinitely more so, to *lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust can corrupt, and where thieves cannot break through and steal?* If it be wise to

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lay up early treaſures of knowlege, for the conduct of life, for the improvement of our profeſſions and faculties, and for the honour and ornament of our advanced years, to ſupport us with dignity in the decline of life; is it not infinitely more ſo, diligently to ſearch after that knowlege that will adorn our Chriſtian profeſſion, and treaſure up thoſe precepts that will conduct us to everlaſting glory, and give us honour in the ſight of angels? Thou ſluggard, if it be wiſe in thee to learn of the ant, to make proviſion for the winter of life, for one ſhort and uncertain ſeaſon; is it not infinitely more ſo, to lay up for all eternity----for a life of endleſs duration and inconceivable happineſs?

THE

THE

True NATURE and CHARACTER

OF

ENVY:

AND

Its *Utter Inconsistency* with PRIVATE,
as well as SOCIAL HAPPINESS.

SERMON III.

PROV. XIV. 30.

A ſound heart is the life of the fleſh; but envy the rottenneſs of the bones.

IT is agreed among moraliſts, that all the laws of nature, as far they comprehend the duties we owe to one another, may be reduced to this one great principle of univerſal benevolence, *viz.* That we lay it down as the fix'd and fundamental rule of all our actions, to do all manner of good, and to abſtain from all manner of evil.

The motives to this conduct, beſides the beauty and agreeableneſs of it, both to our own nature, and the Divine will, are theſe: 1. That (however men of narrow apprehenſions may imagine otherwiſe, yet) all mankind in reality conſult their own intereſt beſt, when they contribute to the good of the whole. 2. That there is an intrinſic pleaſure reſulting from the practice of virtue,

and ſuch as hath a natural tendency to peace of mind, and health of body. And, 3. That it endears and recommends us to the love and eſteem of all mankind.

Whereas, on the contrary, anguiſh of heart, hatred, diſeſteem, and inſecurity, are the natural rewards of iniquity, even in this world: and as this is nowhere more conſpicuous than in the paſſion and vice of envy, now before us; ſo the contraſt betwixt that, and a humane, benevolent, good-natured diſpoſition, is nowhere more ſtrongly and beautifully expreſſed than in the words of my text: *A ſound heart is the life of the fleſh; but envy the rottenneſs of the bones.* A ſound heart, or, as the original may otherwiſe be rendered, *a heart of lenity*, or *medicine*. All which are meant to ſignify, that a benevolent, good-natured diſpoſition, is a kindly, genial, vital principle, that infuſes balm and healing into the blood, and produces a ſtrong pleaſure, like that which reſults from good health, and a right temperament: whereas envy is a leaven that ſours and corrupts, ſets all the humours upon the fret, and is the direct contradiction to happineſs and health; the bane of all that is

good,

good, and beautiful, and deſireable, in life.

And therefore, in order to repreſent this odious paſſion in its true light, and make it as hateful to you as it is deteſtable in itſelf, I ſhall endeavour in the following diſcourſe to ſhew you,

I. The nature and origin of Envy; and who they are that are moſt ſubject to it.

II. I ſhall ſhew you the ſymptoms by which it may be known.

III. I ſhall endeavour to explain and trace out the ill effects of it.

IV. And laſtly, I ſhall endeavour to aſſign the remedies of this pernicious paſſion.

Firſt, then, As to the nature of Envy, it is a pain, or uneaſineſs, ariſing from an apprehenſion of the proſperity and good fortune of others; not becauſe we ſuffer from their welfare, nor that our condition may be bettered by our uneaſineſs, but merely becauſe *their* condition is bettered.

There is a ſtrong jealouſy of pre-eminence and ſuperiority implanted in our nature by Almighty GOD, for wiſe and noble purpoſes: to excite to the purſuit of laudable attainments, and the imitation of good and great actions. When this principle takes root in a good mind, it is called Emulation. Now emulation is alſo an uneaſineſs occaſioned by the good fortune of others; but not becauſe we repine at their proſperity, but becauſe we ourſelves have not attained the ſame good ſucceſs. The effect of this principle is, to excite us to great deſigns, and worthy performances. 'Twas This that made *Cæſar* weep at the ſight of *Alexander*'s ſtatue, to think that he had already paſſed that age at which the other hero had conquered the world.

But when this principle meets with an evil, corrupt diſpoſition, it then degenerates into Envy, the moſt malignant and hateful paſſion in human nature, the worſt weed of the worſt ſoil! And this is ſo far from ſtirring us up to worthy imitations and laudable purſuits, that it takes a quite contrary method: and labours to taint and depreciate,

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what it doth not ſo much as attempt to equal.

Now this paſſion affects us chiefly in relation to our equals; at leaſt thoſe that we think ſhould be ſo, if ſome good turn of fortune had not raiſed them above us: and the reaſon of it ſeems to be this; It hath pleaſed God to implant in us all, ſtrong deſires of power and affluence: but foraſmuch as there is no certain portion of theſe fixed, nor any ſtandard ſettled, by which it may be determined when any man enjoys either of theſe in proportion to his merits; the only way of eſtimating our ſucceſs in the attainment of them, is, by comparing our fortune with thoſe of like birth, or education, or condition of life with ourſelves: if we find we have equaled or exceeded theſe, the natural conſequence is joy and complacence in our condition; but if we are exceeded by them, Emulation, or Envy: Emulation, if we are virtuous and good men (for then this pre-eminence of our equals is a new ſpur to our induſtry, and urges us on to honeſt purſuits); but Envy, if we are corrupt and worthleſs; (for then we are prompted to decry and leſſen what we cannot equal; that ſo, at

leaſt, we may bring thoſe down to our own level, whom we cannot bear to behold above us.

From hence it follows, that we ſeldom envy thoſe whom their birth and fortune have placed greatly above us, nor thoſe that are very far inferior to us; becauſe neither of theſe are the ſtandards by which we meaſure our own felicity: neither do we envy the dead, nor men of remote and foreign regions; becauſe, with theſe, we can have no contention, or competition of honour and pre-eminence.

Now, the perſons moſt ſubject to this unhappy paſſion of Envy are, *1ſt*, The covetous; becauſe they think every thing raviſhed from themſelves, that accrues to their equals; imagining that, if it had not been for their interpoſition, they might have attained thoſe advantages that were equally in their reach.

2dly, (If theſe may juſtly be diſtinguiſhed from the covetous) men of little and mean ſpirits are moſt ſubject to Envy; becauſe to theſe every thing appears great and extraordinary: as if their minds bore ſome analogy to microſcope-glaſſes, which magnify in proportion to their littleneſs.

3dly,

3*dly*, Men of extraordinary endowments and abilities, or that are renowned on account of ſome uncommon excellence, or mighty performances, and, in general, men that are ſtudious of the ſame attainments, whether of wealth, or wiſdom, or valour, or the like, are very ſubject to Envy; becauſe their intereſts either do, or at leaſt are often imagined to interfere, and therefore they cannot bear a rival. 'Twas this ſet *Pompey* and *Cæſar* at mortal variance, becauſe, as the hiſtorians obſerve, the one could not bear an equal, nor the other a ſuperior.

Proud men alſo are remarkably ſubject to this vice, eſpecially if their pride be founded upon wealth, beauty, birth, or any other conſideration diſtinct from real merit, if they have no real and valuable advantages to pride themſelves upon (ſuch as learning, wiſdom, virtue, or uſeful arts, of ſome kind, whereby the world may be benefited); becauſe then their birth, or wealth, or other accidental or imaginary advantages, being their only diſtinctions above others, they cannot bear to ſee thoſe men grow up into eſteem, and wealth, and honour, by the force of their own merit, who before were their inferiors;

riors; and who, they foreſee, muſt one day be better and more juſtly eſteemed than themſelves.

And, *laſtly*, Old men are very ſubject to Envy: becauſe they ſee the youth poſſeſſed of thoſe advantages which once were theirs, and which they imagine they have yet a right to.

And thus having ſhewn you the nature and origin of envy; and who they are that are moſt ſubject to it: I proceed, in the next place,

II. To ſhew the ſymptoms by which it may be known. And,

Firſt, It is a ſhrewd ſign of our envying any perſon, when we find ourſelves averſe from doing him good offices; for this is a great corruption of nature, which, in its purity, is ſocial and benevolent, and hath a ſtrong propenſity to acts of kindneſs and goodneſs, as well as a ſtrong pleaſure in the performance of them: whereas envy is a narrow, ſelfiſh principle, utterly inconſiſtent with that univerſal charity, which is the firſt dictate of uncorrupt nature, and which our bleſſed Saviour recommends to us as the diſtinguiſhing

ſtinguiſhing and fundamental duty of his followers. And yet one would think, that even pride and ambition (which are almoſt inſeparable ingredients of Envy) ſhould find their account in good offices: foraſmuch as to relieve the indigent, to eaſe the oppreſſed, and to comfort the afflicted, to benefit our enemies, and to do good for evil, are, in reality, the happieſt employments and nobleſt triumphs of human nature! and I am confident would always be thought ſo, if it were not for that corrupt, ſelfiſh principle, that checks and cramps every thing that is good and noble in our nature: and therefore it is much to be ſuſpected, that avarice is the great root of Envy; becauſe that is ſo apt to repreſent every thing as loſt, and taken away from ourſelves, that is given to another: as if we were neceſſarily injured by every thing by which another is benefited. But, *2dly*,

A ſecond ſymptom of Envy, and a much ſurer than the former, is, when we are pleaſed with the evil of others. This is ſuch a degree of corruption, as reverſes our whole nature, and renders it the very contrary to what it ſhould be. It is a corruption that ap-

approaches to the malignity of curſed ſpirits, nay, and is monſtrous even in them.——And it hath this ſingularity in it, that it hath evil for its object, in an eminent degree, above any other paſſion whatſoever. Even anger, unruly and outrageous as it is, relaxes either by time or ſatisfaction, and for the moſt part calms into good nature and benevolence; and nothing in nature, but Envy, is ſteadily and permanently malignant.

3*dly*, Another ſymptom of Envy, is, a cenſorious diſpoſition; and this diſcovers itſelf either in induſtriouſly ſilencing the good actions of others, or expoſing the bad: But indeed it ſeldom reſts here.——It extends itſelf even to the doubtful and indifferent; nay, too often, to the good and virtuous: and ſeldom fails, either by uncharitable interpretations, or ſtrained conſequences, to affix ſome colour or intention of evil to them. And becauſe it is often ſeen in this ſhape, and is always odious in all ſhapes, therefore it uſes a variety of artifices to hide its deformity. The moſt common diſguiſe is pity; and it muſt be owned it is at the ſame time the beſt: becauſe there is no excellence in this world that hath not its allay.

Learning is too often proud, judgment ſlow, wit injudicious, and ſo of the reſt: and therefore 'tis eaſy to hide the rancour of our Envy, under the compaſſion we would be thought to beſtow upon that unhappy imperfection, which clouds and depreſſes the excellence we ſeem to admire, at the ſame time that we induſtriouſly malign and decry it as much as poſſible.

At other times it puts on the appearance of wit and delicacy: it is a nicety of taſte that diſpoſes us to diſlike and diſreliſh the accompliſhments and performances of others; but ſtill with an air of contempt, and conſcious ſuperiority, rather than of envy.

The laſt ſymptom of envy that I ſhall mention, is, a diſcontented, querulous diſpoſition, repining at the diſpenſations of Providence; that the foundations are out of courſe, virtue and merit are deſpiſed and oppreſſed, and nothing but vice and villainy proſper, and carry all before them! and yet, when all this comes to be enquired into, it will be found, perhaps, to mean no more than that the complainant is not in the condition he wiſhes to be; or, in other words, that the moſt worthleſs man alive is not at the

the top of his ambition and avarice! Let any man but conſider the ſhameful hypocriſy of this conduct, to make a ſeeming concern for the intereſt of virtue and religion a cloak to the moſt flagitious vice! Nor is the folly of it leſs conſpicuous than the impiety; foraſmuch as the true way to happineſs and proſperity is an honeſt induſtry, and an humble ſubmiſſion and entire reſignation to the wiſe diſpenſations of the Divine Providence; and not to graſp at any thing that was not intended for us; becauſe, when we do, we are ſure of vexation and diſappointment. This querulous and cenſorious diſpoſition is attended with this farther ill conſequence, that it too often degenerates into doubts, and deſpondency, concerning the Providence of God, and concludes in the horrors of deſpair.

And thus much for the ſeveral ſymptoms of Envy. I proceed, in the *third* place,

III. To enquire into the ill effects of it: and theſe are of two ſorts, either to the envious perſon, or to ſociety.

Firſt, To the envious perſon; and one of theſe my text expreſſes, by *rottenneſs to the bones*.

bones. Good nature operates agreeably, both upon the body and ſoul; whereas envy waſtes and diſtracts: the eyes are ſunk by it, and the countenance becomes haggard and livid: a ſecret canker gnaws the heart, and eats into the bones, *like a moth fretting a garment*. The mind, in the mean time, is in a perpetual ferment, *working, and reſtleſs, like a troubled ſea*. A ſucceſſion of turbulent and unruly paſſions ſeize it: all within is in uproar! and conſcience and religion loſt in the tumult.

But this is not all——The worſt effect of envy is, the influence it hath upon the moral ſtate of the mind; it does not only kill our quiet, but our virtue likewiſe. And the reaſon is evident---All virtue conſiſts in a ſocial diſpoſition; love and benevolence are the fountains from whence it flows: and therefore when envy once poiſons the mind with deſpite, and gall, and enmity, may we not juſtly ask, with St. *James, My brethren, can the ſame fountain ſend forth ſweet water and bitter?* The ſoul is called off, by this means, from the nobleſt objects and inclinations, and perverted to the vileſt and the worſt; when, inſtead of being employed in contriving our own ſalvation, and pro-

promoting the good of mankind, we are buſied in projecting calamity, and torture, and affliction, both to ourſelves and others. In the mean time death ſteals faſt upon us, and the ends of life are loſt and defeated. We live in the world like furies, and we leave it in a condition that renders us unfit for every thing but the converſation of fiends, and curſed ſpirits. And this is one obvious reaſon, why wicked men are to dwell with devils in another world; becauſe, when once the mind is imbued with the malignity of vice, it is unfitted for every thing but the ſociety of curſed ſpirits: and it is as impoſſible for it to derive any conſolation from the ſociety of angels, and archangels, and all the beatitudes of heaven; as that Envy, hatred, and malice, ſhould delight in love, and friendſhip, and univerſal charity.

But, 2*dly*, Another ill effect that envy hath upon the perſon poſſeſſed by it, is, that it expoſes him to the juſt hatred and averſion of all mankind; and therefore it is utterly repugnant to reaſon, and the common intereſts of life, becauſe it puts a man upon ſuch methods of obtaining his ends as muſt of neceſſity defeat his own purpoſes: for no

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man is ſelf-ſufficient, but hath frequent need of the friendſhip and aſſiſtance of others, in all conditions and circumſtances of life. And is any man ſo fooliſh as to imagine he can procure the friendſhip and aſſiſtance of others by calumny and abuſe, by deſpite and enmity? This is ſtupid and abſurd. And therefore envy will be ſo far from advancing us in the attainment of any one uſeful purpoſe of life, that it muſt of neceſſity be the greateſt clog and impediment to all our endeavours; foraſmuch as it will at once deprive us, both of the love of ſociety, and the favour of GOD, and leave us equally deteſted and deſpiſed of both.

But the ill effects which this pernicious paſſion hath upon ſociety, are beyond all expreſſion: it is *an unruly evil, full of deadly poiſon*; and ſpreads its malignant influence where-ever it comes. *Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to ſtand before envy?* ſaith *Solomon.* Merit and innocence, the two great ſecurities of peace and happineſs, are ſo far from being ſhielded againſt it, that they are the moſt of all expoſed to its malignant aſſaults, and the ſure objects of its fierceſt vengeance. Witneſs the violence of the ſons of *Jacob,* who could

could ſacrifice their own brother to the jealouſy of a dreaded ſuperiority, even in a dream. Witneſs the implacable malice of *Saul* againſt *David*, the man of all the earth he was moſt obliged to; who had ſo often ſaved him, and his kingdom, from ruin; and was the greateſt glory, as well as the greateſt ſecurity, of his country. It unhinges all the obligations of gratitude and juſtice, and changes the very tendencies of our nature: it is conſcious of its own malignity, and therefore 'tis impoſſible to relax it by good offices, becauſe it juſtly regards all returns of kindneſs and benevolence to be (as in truth they are) the greateſt reproaches to it. In one word, 'tis for the moſt part to this one fountain, that faction and ſtrife, murder and hatred, and infamy, owe their riſe; and therefore it is, that whenſoever the apoſtles ſpeak of it, they never fail to join to it murders, wraths, ſtrifes, malice, evil-ſpeakings, *&c.* to ſhew that theſe are all the natural, and almoſt unavoidable conſequences of that paſſion. Thus St. *Paul* (*Rom.* i. 29.) ſpeaking of the ſins of the *Gentiles*, which were the conſequences of their irreligion, mentions, among others, that they were *full of Envy*: and then he im-

immediately ſubjoins *murder, debate, deceit, malignity.* After the ſame manner, in his 2d epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, xii. 20. he connects *envyings, miſchiefs, ſtrifes, backbitings, whiſperings.* St. *Peter* alſo connects *envyings and evil-ſpeakings*: and St. *James* aſſures us, that, *where envying is, there is confuſion, and every evil work.*—But ſurely one of the moſt fatal and lamentable effects of Envy is, that it rages greatly and remarkably among perſons that are ſtudious of the ſame honeſt and laudable attainments; and therefore it were highly to be wiſh'd, that thoſe men could be brought to believe, that where-ever there is virtue and induſtry, there will always be a fund of wealth and power, and honour, ſufficient to crown the deſires of any poſſible number of candidates in proportion to their merit; and that the fund of glory will always riſe with the number of its competitors. It is in this commerce, as in all others that are wiſe and well regulated; the number of fair traders will, in the ordinary courſe of things, be ſo far from diminiſhing, that they muſt increaſe the wealth of a nation; and every ſingle man, if avarice and private intereſt do not injuriouſly interpoſe, will be a gainer

by that increaſe: at leaſt, it is certainly ſo in this, however it may hold in commerce of other kinds: foraſmuch as in the purſuits of fame from learning, from virtue, from good abilities of any kind, the number of candidates, if Envy do not interpoſe, will always increaſe the fund of honour and applauſe: becauſe every man will then have juſt ſo many more equal and judicious admirers, as he hath competitors.

I come now to the *laſt* thing propoſed, which was, to aſſign the beſt remedies I can for the cure of this pernicious paſſion. And the firſt rule I ſhall lay down for the remedy of this evil paſſion of Envy, is, That we ſettle our opinions of things, and endeavour to take a right eſtimate of them: we *call evil good, and good evil*; forgetting that the meaſure by which we are to judge of the true value of all things under heaven, is the price at which we find them rated in the law of God. The laws of God are the eternal ſtandards of good and evil: what they recommend as valuable, or injoin as wiſe, to be regarded, are truly ſo; and what they diſclaim as vile, or forbid as noxious are found in fact to be ſo. And therefore

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the obſervance of theſe laws hath a direct and natural tendency to health and credit, and happineſs of every kind; and the neglect and tranſgreſſion of them as directly and naturally tends to miſery and misfortune: inſomuch that to a man who hath rightly conſidered his own nature, and the nature of things without him, there cannot be a clearer or more fix'd poſition than this, that the conformity of our actions to the law of GOD, muſt naturally tend to make us wiſe and happy; and, on the other hand, that ſin and folly, and pain, are inſeparably connected.

If then we ſettle our judgment of things according to the law of GOD, it is a neceſſary conſequence from this, that we correct the erroneous opinion we have of ſuperfluous wealth. Let us examine, Is there any bleſſing pronounced upon wealth in the holy Scriptures? Not one. There are indeed great bleſſings pronounced upon charity and mercy: and theſe bleſſings are fully inſured to us, by being merciful after our power.---- *If thou haſt much, give plenteouſly: If thou haſt little, do thy diligence gladly to give of that little.* All the great demands of life are within the compaſs of a very moderate

competency: our folly is, that we imagine wealth, that is in truth ſuperfluity, to be the ſtandard of all human felicity: whereas, if we judged rightly of things, we ſhould eſteem all ſuperfluities to be, as really they are, trifles, that are wholly impertinent to our happineſs; that can adminiſter no one ſolid pleaſure or ſatisfaction of life, otherwiſe than by being employed to beneficent and charitable purpoſes: and, even there, they have no more merit than what is derived from the goodneſs of the giver's will.—— They are deſireable, or otherwiſe, according to the wiſdom and virtue of the owner: whereas, in their ordinary uſe, they ſeldom ſerve any higher or nobler purpoſes than miniſtring Fuel to all the unruly paſſions that tear and diſtract our lives; and more particularly to Envy, the bane of all felicity: for as *Ariſtotle* juſtly obſerves, the more we abound, and the higher we riſe in Wealth and power, the leſs can we bear to be equaled or outdone.---Is it poſſible then, that a man in his right ſenſes can repine becauſe he wants ſuperfluities? or envy thoſe that have them? Or, in other words, is it poſſible that any man in his ſenſes can repine, that he

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is freed from the great incitements to pride, and envy, and avarice, to luxury, and intemperance, and exceſs? the great and ſure torments of life?

But, 2dly, the next remedy of envy that I ſhall mention is, that we ſhould endeavour to make a right judgment of our own worth and abilities; and compare our own with the condition of other men as impartially as we can: and if we do this with any degree of equality, we ſhall find, that there are others in the world, at leaſt as good, as wiſe, and as valuable, as we are; and who enjoy ſtations and advantages they deſerve as well: perhaps too we ſhall find, that if merit were the ſtandard of honour and affluence, we ſhould not abound altogether as much as we do; and others, that now pay court to us, would be raiſed to great heights above us: but, at leaſt, we ſhall have abundant reaſon to bleſs God for the advantages of our own condition; and no reaſon in the world to repine at the advanced condition of others: we ſhall find abundant reaſon to conclude, that the ſeveral ranks and diſtinctions of men are indeed neceſſary to the government and well-being of the world; but, if we eſti-

mate things according to the rules of reaſon and religion, do not in the leaſt affect our real happineſs. In ſhort, we ſhall find, that nothing in nature is more falſly rated than felicity; that the diſtribution of it is, in reality, infinitely more equal than is imagined; and that it is not poverty and wealth, knowlege or ignorance, honour or obſcurity, but that it is, in truth, virtue and vice, religion and irreligion, good and evil diſpoſitions, that make the great and material differences between the happineſs of one man and another.

3dly, Another cure of envy (and what will effectually ſuperſede the neceſſity of all others) is, to reflect ſeriouſly upon the vanity and inſignificancy of all worldly advantages.-----My brethren, would any man in his ſenſes envy a poor inſect the pride and the pleaſure of baſking and fluttering for a few hours in the ſun? or envy the ſhort-lived flower the pride and the gaiety of thoſe rich deluſive colours that blazon it to the eye, our ornament one hour, and the next our averſion; to-day admired, and to-morrow trampled under foot? And ſhall we envy him, *whoſe breath is in his noſtrils?*

whoſe

whoſe glory fadeth like a flower? Shall we envy him who hath *ſaid to corruption, Thou art my father; and to the worm, My mother and my ſiſter?* Alas! what are all the favours either of fortune or princes, but the ſunſhine of a few hours, fleeting faſt enough of itſelf in the natural courſe, and yet frequently over-caſt before the ſhort day is done? And what are all the vanities of this world but the gaiety of a few fading colours, feeding *the luſt of the eye, and the pride of life*, for a ſeaſon, but with no ſolid or permanent ſatisfaction?---Nay more, what is life itſelf, what is the life of man, more than the life of a flower? is not *all fleſh* (as St. *Peter* moſt admirably expreſſes it, 1 Ep. i. 24.) *as graſs, and all the glory of man as the flower of graſs? the graſs withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away.*

This once conſidered as it ought, what have we to do in this world, but to employ the little time allowed us, in the diligent diſcharge of our duty in that ſtate of life unto which it has pleaſed God to call us; renouncing all envious reflections and inquiries, all mean and unworthy ſolicitude about the tranſient advantages of others; and referring,

in all humility, both their concerns, and our own, to the good providence of that God, who debaſes one man, and exalts another, for wiſe reaſons, not always obvious to us, nor fit they ſhould be? By this means our minds will be prepared for the influence and aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit of God, and the Holy Ghoſt will delight to dwell with us, and *guide us into all truth.* And to this end we ought earneſtly and inceſſantly to pray for God's aſſiſtance and direction in all our undertakings; and more particularly, that he would purify our ſouls from envy, hatred, and malice, and all uncharitableneſs. And we may be ſure God will never be wanting, on his part, to thoſe that are rightly diſpoſed, and capacitate themſelves for, his aſſiſtance: but it is vain either to hope, or beg, his aid in this caſe, as long as our errors remain with us; as long as wealth and honour are regarded as the greateſt goods, and poverty and obſcurity as the greateſt evils.

In the laſt place; when we find ourſelves inclined to cenſure the actions and intentions of others, to ſilence the good, to expoſe the bad, and malign the innocent and indifferent; in this caſe, we ſhould remember and imi-

tate

tate the goodneſs of Almighty God, who takes pleaſure in the happineſs of his creatures; who knows our infirmities, and hath compaſſion upon them; and becauſe he delights in the ſalvation of ſinners, deals with us, as if he overlooked the evil of our doings, for the ſake of even that little portion of good that is in them. This conduct of the divine mercy and goodneſs it ſhould always be our earneſt care, as it will always be our higheſt glory and happineſs, to imitate: and one ſignal and immediate advantage of it, will be this; that then we ſhall be ſo far from repining at the good actions and good fortune of others, that we ſhall rejoice and take delight in them: by this means we ſhall enlarge our capacity of happineſs, and be enabled to ſhare in all the felicity we either ſee, or conceive, others to enjoy: at the ſame time we ſhall refine and raiſe our nature, and be fitted for the ſociety of heaven; where the ſervants and ſaints of God are delighted with their mutual felicity, and where the happineſs of each would be exceedingly impaired, if it were not participated by all: and therefore it is, in this reſpect, a juſt and judicious repreſentation which is made to us of heaven, under

der the image of a muſical concert; where all enjoy all, to the extent of their capacity; and where, we all know, the pleaſure of the harmony is greatly increaſed by being communicated.

To which region of conſummate and unenvied felicity, God of his infinite mercy conduct us all, thro' the merits and mediation of *Jeſus Chriſt*.

THE

THE TRUE NATURE OF PRIDE:

How *fooliſh* and *ill-founded* it is in all its PRETENCES.

THE TRUE NATURE OF PRIDE:

How Ready and Wayward it is to
all Insurrections

SERMON IV.

PROV. XXVI. 12.

Seeſt thou a man wiſe in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him.

SUCH a reflection as this upon Pride, from the wiſeſt of all mortals, is enough to put every man living out of conceit with it, that hath the leaſt remains of common ſenſe: nay, one would think it were enough to put pride out of conceit with itſelf. And it would certainly do ſo, if it were not a vice as hardened as it is ignorant; that is, if it were not every way the moſt ſenſeleſs principle in human nature. And therefore *Solomon* very juſtly prefers a fool, that is, a man of the loweſt capacity, to him that is wiſe in his own conceit; for, by a *fool*, in this place, is not meant one intirely void of all the principles

ciples of knowlege, of all the powers of rational perception; becauſe ſuch a one it is impoſſible to conceive any hopes of. The fool here mentioned is what the *Greeks* call ἰδιώτης; that is, a ſimple, ignorant man: one who, although defective both in point of abilities and information, yet is in a capacity of being inſtructed and improved; and for that reaſon is preferred by *Solomon* to him that is *wiſe in his own conceit*; becauſe Pride is ſuch a degree of folly, as precludes all poſſibility of information and improvement: and therefore I think it neceſſary to premiſe, that this diſcourſe is in no wiſe intended for the inſtruction or advantage of the ſelf-ſufficient part of my audience, if there be any ſuch who hear me: for to intend ſo vain and impracticable a purpoſe, would be a degree of folly almoſt equal to the vice I am going to expoſe.---This diſcourſe then is only meant for the uſe of thoſe who are of a meek, teachable diſpoſition; to guard or recover them from the infection of a vice, to which they are too much expoſed, from ignorance, youth, inexperience, and inconſideration, as well as the influence of too many evil examples all around them.

And, in order to do this, I ſhall endeavour,

Firſt, To explain and ſtate the true notion of Pride.

Secondly, I ſhall lay before you the ſymptoms by which it may be known, and the evils of each ſymptom. And,

Thirdly, I ſhall mention the ordinary cauſes, or rather occaſions, of this vice; and ſhew you how fooliſh and ill founded it is in all its pretences.

Firſt, then, The true nature of Pride conſiſts in overvaluing our own worth, and thinking meanly and contemptuouſly of others, in compariſon of ourſelves: it ariſeth from ſelf-love, and is the utmoſt abuſe and corruption of that blind principle. We have all a tenderneſs for ourſelves, and our own concerns; wiſely implanted in us by Almighty GOD, for our preſervation and well-being. We have alſo a ſtrong principle of good-will to the reſt of mankind, no way inconſiſtent with that nearer concern for ourſelves,

ſelves, and our own intereſts, until Pride ſtep in; and diveſting us of that diffuſive and God-like principle of univerſal good-will, centres all our regards in ourſelves.

Now the ſymptoms by which this pernicious principle may be ordinarily known, are theſe:

1*ſt*, A high look, and a haughty carriage. ——*There is a generation* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. xxx. 13.); *oh! how lofty are their eyes! and their eye-lids are lifted up.* A race of men, of ſuch exalted vanity, as overlooks the reſt of mankind, and regards them as an inferior ſpecies, below their notice; and therefore they will ſcarce ſo much as vouchſafe to look down upon them, unleſs ſometimes, it may be, in pity and contempt.——

This is that high look, of which God hath ſo often expreſſed his deteſtation in the holy Scriptures. Thus *Solomon*, in the 6th chapter of his *Proverbs*——*Theſe ſix things doth the Lord hate; yea, ſeven are an abomination unto him:* and the firſt of theſe is *a proud look.* And *David*, in the 101ſt *Pſalm*, *Him that hath an high look, and a proud heart, I will not ſuffer.* And, as this high look is deteſtable in the ſight of God, it is

not leſs ſo in the eyes of men; for the meaneſt mortal expects, and hath a right, to be treated by the greateſt, upon the foot of a natural equality; and conſequently can ill brook with inſolence and contempt: and therefore how any man of common ſenſe can allow himſelf in a demeanour ſo hateful to GOD and man, is not eaſy to be imagined. Beſides, this demeanour is not only very faulty, but it is alſo very fooliſh; becauſe this faſtidious deportment is ſuch a vaunting of our own ſuperior worth and excellence, as ſets mankind upon examining our pretenſions, and ſcanning our merit with ſuch a degree of ſtrictneſs, as perhaps the beſt actions, and moſt unblemiſhed merit, in the world, can very ill bear. And, if ſuch a ſcrutiny naturally tend to diminiſh the glory of the beſt actions, and the moſt exalted merit, how muſt it of neceſſity expoſe the folly and ſtupidity of all Pride that is ill founded, and render that utterly ridiculous! And therefore *Ariſtotle* defines a *magnanimous man, one that thinks himſelf worthy of great things, and is ſo: but*, ſaith he, *he that thinks himſelf worthy, and is not, is a fool*—ὁ γὰρ μὴ καταξιῶ, αὐτὸ ποιῶν, ἠλιθιος.

Again, Another ſymptom of Pride, is, ſcornful language. It is true, a high look, and a haughty demeanour, are indications enough of inward Pride and Inſolence; but then it is Pride within ſome bounds, and ſuch as a wiſe man will often bear with, in pity to the ignorance from whence it flows: but ſcornful words are indications of more exalted inſolence, and ſuch as render it every way intolerable: and therefore ſome vain men, ſenſible of the inconveniency of this conduct, and dreading the rough returns ſuch ſhocking treatment frequently meets with, are often obſerved to run into the other extreme, and affect a phraſe and a demeanour uncommonly ſmooth and complaiſant; to court thoſe returns of civility and reſpect, which the ſtupidity or ingratitude of mankind might otherwiſe refuſe to their ſuperior merit: and this they find a ſucceſsful method at once, to flatter, and (as they think) to conceal their vanity. And this, without queſtion, is the wiſer conduct of the two; becauſe a rude, contemptuous treatment is ſhocking to the meaneſt mortal, and is naturally productive of hatred and contempt from all mankind: and as nothing can be

more ſhocking than to meet with ſuch returns from our own ſpecies; ſo nothing can be more faulty, or more fooliſh, than to deſerve it.

But here we muſt obſerve, that this ſpirit of inſolence doth not always diſcover itſelf in open reproaches, but chuſeth ſometimes rather to hide itſelf under the veil of ſmooth and ſubtile inſinuations, or under the mask of civility and mirth, delighting to turn the manners and characters of men into ridicule; yet is it not leſs hateful to the reſt of the world upon that account, but is rather more the object of their ſecret deteſtation, as it is more defended from their open reſentments.

This ſpirit of reproach and ridicule, together with the folly of it, is moſt excellently ſet forth by *Solomon*, in the character of the *ſcorner*, throughout his whole book of *Proverbs*: where he is repreſented, firſt, as a fool; and not only ſo, but incapable of wiſdom: ſecondly, as incorrigible: and, thirdly, as an abomination to GOD and man. Thus, *Prov.* xiii. 1. *A wiſe ſon heareth his father's inſtruction, but a ſcorner heareth not rebuke.* Here you ſee the wiſe ſon, and the

ſcorner, are put in oppoſition to one another, as terms directly oppoſite; and with great juſtice: for, as the teachable ſon is called wiſe, becauſe he is capable of information, and always diſpoſed to receive it; ſo the ſcorner, being hardened to all precepts, and above information, and conſequently incapable of wiſdom, is juſtly deemed as the worſt of fools: and therefore *Solomon* adds, chap. xiv. ver. 6. *A ſcorner ſeeketh wiſdom, and findeth it not.*——And the reaſon is evident, becauſe he deſpiſeth all the natural means of attaining it.

Again, The ſcorner is incorrigible; and therefore when he is in an error, he muſt continue in it. *He that reproveth a ſcorner* (ſaith *Solomon*) *getteth to himſelf ſhame.* The inſolence of his nature makes all correction, however gentle, and proper, and well-timed, intolerable to him: and therefore, whoever attempts it, inſtead of hoping for reformation and amendment, muſt expect to meet with all the returns either of open rudeneſs, or diſguiſed deriſion. For this reaſon *Solomon* adds, *Rebuke not a ſcorner, leſt he hate thee: rebuke a wiſe man, and he will love thee.* And again, *A*

ſcorner

ſcorner loveth not one that reproveth him; neither will he go to the wiſe.

In the laſt place, The *ſcorner is an abomination to God and man:* and one reaſon why he is ſo, beſides thoſe above-mentioned, is, becauſe he is exceedingly contentious, and conſequently is the bane of ſociety. *Proud and haughty ſcorner is his name, who dealeth in proud wrath,* ſaith *Solomon.* —— Modeſty, good-nature, and affability, are the bonds of peace; and, on the other hand, inſolence and contemptuous treatment are naturally productive of enmity and contention; and no peace can dwell with them: and therefore the wiſe man rightly adviſeth, *Caſt out the ſcorner, and contention ſhall go out; yea, ſtrife and reproach ſhall ceaſe.* —— Surely then it is no wonder, that a character ſo conſtituted, an incorrigible compound of folly, and inſolence, and contention, ſhould be hateful to the whole world: and we are well aſſured from our own experience, as well as the wiſe man's obſervation, in the 24th chapter of *Proverbs,* that in truth it is ſo; *The ſcorner is an abomination to men.* And that he is not leſs ſo to Almighty God, the ſame wiſe man affirmeth in the 3d chap-

ter, 34th verſe, *Surely he ſcorneth the ſcorners; but he giveth grace unto the lowly.*

3*dly*, Another ſymptom of Pride is, when we value men upon thoſe ſuppoſed advantages that are of the ſame nature with our own, and deſpiſe thoſe of a different character, altho' perhaps more really and truly valuable: and this may be termed profeſſional, or ſtational vanity; as it ariſeth from a high opinion of the excellence of that ſtation, or profeſſion, or condition of life, we happen to be placed in: and this vanity ſeems to run through all orders and conditions of men. Thus a ſoldier is apt to think every thing contemptible, in compariſon with his man of honour and gallantry. And as the *Turks* are a race of men wholly illiterate, a ſcholar is at this day the name of the greateſt reproach among them that they can think of: and a neighbouring nation, often at variance with them, upon other accounts, are not ill agreed with them in this. The mere ſcholar is apt to think as meanly of the braveſt unlettered hero; and the man of noble birth equally contemns, and is often the contempt of both, and with equal reaſon. Now this vanity is plainly owing to a poor partiality for

for our own ſtation and character, and ariſeth from our ignorance of the excellence of other employments and conditions of life, and their uſefulneſs to mankind; and therefore it needs no other imputation than this, that it is the effect of a mean capacity, and narrow thinking: for nothing is more evident than that the honourableneſs of every employment and condition in the world, is to be meaſured by its uſefulneſs to mankind; and thoſe that are moſt beneficial, are ever to be moſt eſteemed and honoured. Now theſe may be diſtinguiſhed into ſuch as are neceſſary to the being, and ſuch as are neceſſary to the well-being of mankind; and the latter are always to be preferred; and thoſe employments that are of moſt uſe to many, before thoſe that are of uſe to few: and therefore government is more honourable than any other condition of life, becauſe a good governor is the greateſt benefactor to the greateſt number of mankind. And foraſmuch as true religion and virtue tend more to promote, and to preſerve, the real happineſs of mankind, than any or all other things whatſoever; therefore the teachers of true religion and virtue are, under the governors

of ſociety, the greateſt benefactors to mankind. And, in general, the guiding and directing parts of ſociety, are more honourable, becauſe more beneficial, than the guided; as the eyes are more excellent than the hands or feet, and the underſtanding than either. Upon this principle, a good ſchoolmaſter is, perhaps, one of the moſt honourable employments in the commonwealth: not according to the fantaſtic ſchemes of honour that have obtained in the world, but according to the eternal laws of reaſon and truth.

The laſt ſymptom of Pride that I ſhall mention, is the proneneſs and promptneſs obſervable in ſome men, of vaunting their own virtue or original, or exploits, upon all occaſions; and making themſelves, and their anceſtors, their perpetual theme: for this is a ſure indication that they are full of themſelves. And this humour too often carries men into a vain oſtentation of power, capacity, birth, and the like; than which nothing can be more ridiculous. And therefore *Solomon* rightly adviſeth, *Let another man praiſe thee, and not thine own mouth; a ſtranger, and not thine own lips.* Praiſe indeed is a debt, juſtly

juſtly due to worth and merit of every kind, from the whole world; and they who withhold it, where it is due, are as unjuſt in that inſtance, as they can be in any other: but then it is a debt much better received than exacted; received as an honour, than exacted as a right. This was a vanity that ſeems to have reigned remarkably among the *Corinthians*; and St. *Paul* rebukes it with a modeſty, and an addreſs, the moſt becoming and amiable that can be imagined: for although he was of more value in the ſight of GOD, than any, or perhaps all thoſe of that city whom he was appointed to inſtruct; yet he did not dare to aſſert it by ſelf-praiſe: *For we dare not* (ſays he) *make ourſelves of the number, or compare ourſelves with ſome that commend themſelves: but they meaſuring themſelves by themſelves, and compareing themſelves amongſt themſelves, are not wiſe: but we* (ſays the apoſtle) *will not boaſt of things without our meaſure.* There is no ſuch thing as perfection in man. All human excellencies are comparative; and had thoſe vain *Corinthians* eſtimated theirs by thoſe of their teacher, they had been ſufficiently humbled. He was a man diſtinguiſhed by GOD, with great accompliſhments and endowments:

dowments: his faith was pure, his piety fervent; his zeal for the ſervice and honour of God, ſtrong and ſteady; his life one ſeries of ſtudying to do good; his learning extenſive, his addreſs decent and maſterly, and in the perfection of what the polite world calls good breeding; his judgment clear, his ſtile ſublime, and his eloquence unequalled: and yet all theſe could not ſecure him the honour he well deſerved from a vain and a ſelf-ſufficient people, whoſe united talents and merits were contemptible upon the compariſon: yet all the ill treatment he received from them, operated only to his own greater humiliation in the ſight of God, and more fervent prayers for their amendment. Happy are all thoſe miniſters and ſervants of JESUS CHRIST, who can follow the example of his patience, and his piety.

And thus I have done with the ſeveral ſymptoms of Pride. But here it is proper to obſerve, That ſince a diſtinction of the ſeveral ranks and orders of men is neceſſary to the government of the world, therefore a proper ſupport of that diſtinction is not Pride, becauſe it is neceſſary and uſeful, and conſequently not faulty: and therefore for us to interpret

terpret this conduct in our ſuperiors, as the effect of Pride, is an argument of Pride in ourſelves; and is, in reality, miſtaking our own Pride for the Pride of other men. But, on the other hand, we ſhould remember, that this ſupport of diſtinction is proper only in public characters, and in diſcharge of duty to the public, becauſe it is the public that requires it: whereas, in private, it is more becoming to forget diſtinctions; and rather to receive reſpect than to require it, or even ſeem to expect it: and therefore, in that capacity, men would do well to diſtinguiſh themſelves by humanity, good-nature, and affability; perhaps, too, by the luſtre of thoſe talents that have already diſtinguiſhed them to the world, and raiſed them above the common level: for we ſhould always remember, that good talents were beſtowed by the Almighty God, for the eaſe, the pleaſure, and the benefit of mankind, and ſhould always be employed as they were intended. All ſuperiority of one man over another, was intended, as well for the good of thoſe who are governed, as of thoſe that bear rule, and therefore ſhould always be directed to the ends for which it was deſigned; ſhould always

always be employed in ſuch a manner, as to make men find it a happineſs to have ſuperiors.

Farther yet, Conſciouſneſs of a man's own worth, doth by no means denominate him proud, provided that he doth not over-rate it. For men to know their own merit, is no more a fault than it is to ſee clearly, or to hear diſtinctly. It is in many caſes neceſſary to know it, in order to make a right uſe of it. For example, If a man could not diſtinguiſh fortitude from raſhneſs, in his own character, as well as in that of other men, his virtue would be uſeleſs at beſt, and, perhaps, pernicious: and ſo in other inſtances.

St. *Paul* is a very remarkable inſtance to this purpoſe; for altho' he had as much humility at heart, as perhaps any man ever was bleſſed with; yet there were occaſions, wherein he was forced to aſſert his own talents and endowments, and the diſtinctions beſtowed upon him by Almighty God. And indeed it was ſcarcely poſſible to be avoided, when he found men, whoſe capacities and manners were every way contemptible upon the

the compariſon, preferred to him. The caſe was this:

St. *Paul* had as much zeal for true religion, and every thing relating to it, as a good man ſhould have. However, there were among the *Corinthians* ſome ſanctified, hypocritical Phariſees, who, under the ſhew of ſuperior piety, and more exalted zeal for the glory of GOD, made it their buſineſs to vilify the apoſtle upon all occaſions, to decry his zeal, his piety, his talents, and merits of every kind, and magnify their own. Theſe inſolent vaunters the apoſtle could not bear, tho' his people could. He well knew the folly and deformity of ſuch a character; but, ſince this vanity opened a way to their favour, even where it was ill founded; a man, who became *all things to all men, that he might gain ſome*, was ſufficiently juſtified in aſſerting ſolid merit, in oppoſition to ſpecious hypocriſy. *Seeing* (ſays he) *that many glory after the fleſh, I will glory alſo; for ye ſuffer fools gladly, ſeeing ye yourſelves be wiſe:* for, *ye ſuffer, if a man bring you into bondage*; i. e. if a man lead and govern you as he pleaſes, like ſo many ſlaves and vaſſals: *ye ſuffer, if a man devour you*; i. e. if, under

pretence for more zeal of charity, but in reality to enrich and exalt himſelf, he extort more from you than you are able to expend to thoſe uſes. *Ye ſuffer, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himſelf.*

And, after all, who were theſe vain vaunters? Why, in reality, they were vile impoſtors, children of the devil; but ſeeming ſaints! *For ſuch* (ſays St. *Paul) are falſe apoſtles, deceitful workers; transforming themſelves into the apoſtles of Chriſt! And no marvel, for Satan himſelf is transformed into an angel of light: therefore it is no great thing, if his miniſters alſo be transformed as the miniſters of righteouſneſs, whoſe end ſhall be according to their works.*

The apoſtle then proceeds to aſſert his own character, and undoubted ſuperiority over ſuch wretches. And ſurely nothing could be more grievous to a man of his character, than to be reduced to the neceſſity of entering into ſuch a compariſon. It put all his humility to the proof: and no humility had a harder trial. But it was a debt he owed, not only to himſelf, but to the world; and it muſt be paid. Nothing but the preference given to a vile impoſtor could provoke him

to

to ſelf-praiſe: and poſſibly nothing elſe could ſo intirely juſtify him in it, as the iniquity and inſult of ſuch a preference.

And thus having ſhewn you the ſeveral ſymptoms of Pride, and thoſe appearances that are ſometimes miſtaken for it; I ſhould now proceed, in the *third* place, to ſhew the ordinary cauſes of this vice, how fooliſh and ill-founded it is in all its pretences.

THE TRUE NATURE OF PRIDE:

How *fooliſh* and *ill-founded* it is in all its PRETENCES.

THE

TRUE NATURE

OF

PRIDE:

How *foolish* and *ill-founded* it is in all its PRETENCES.

H

SERMON V.

PROV. XXVI. 12.

Seeſt thou a man wiſe in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him.

HAVING, in a former diſcourſe on theſe words, explained and ſtated the true nature of Pride, and laid before you the ſeveral ſymptoms by which it may be known, and the evils of each ſymptom;

I now proceed, in the *third* place, to number up the ordinary cauſes, or rather occaſions of this vice; and to ſhew you how fooliſh and ill-founded it is in all its pretences.

And the firſt cauſe of Pride that I ſhall mention is Learning.

When men have ſucceeded ſo far in the purſuit of knowlege, as to find they have ſurpaſſed thoſe of their own condition or

character, their vain imagination immediately goes to work, and ſwells them into beings of a ſuperior order. Their genius is far above the common ſtandard; and it is fit they ſhould let mankind know it, by aſſerting that pre-eminence that is due to them. And hence it is that a learned fool is oftentimes the moſt intolerable of all others; becauſe he hath acquired ſuch a degree of vanity from his knowlege, as is ſufficient to inſpire him with aſſurance enough to ſay any thing that comes into his head, however ſhocking. Perhaps, too, he hath acquired volubility of ſpeech, to deliver his conceits with eaſe; and both theſe naturally produce one another. His vanity prompts him to diſplay every quaint conceit that comes into his thoughts: and every fine conceit that falls from him, inflames his vanity. And thus he goes on to admire himſelf, and to become ridiculous and intolerable to all the reſt of the world.

Now this is, perhaps, one of the moſt deſperate and irreclaimable characters in life. Error and miſconduct of any other kind are within the reach of correction and admoni-

tion;

tion; but Pride, learned Pride, is incapable of either. And therefore *Solomon*'s obſervation in my text, is, in this caſe, ſtrictly true: *Seeſt thou a man wiſe in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him.* A man of the meaneſt capacity, if he be not intoxicated with Pride, is at leaſt capable of correction and admonition; and is alſo, for the moſt part, of an humble and teachable diſpoſition; and conſequently is in a capacity of being modeled into ſomething uſeful to mankind, at leaſt of being made inoffenſive, if not uſeful; whereas this other creature is a common and incorrigible nuiſance: and the beſt that can be hoped of him, is, to become at laſt a prey to flatterers and ſycophants, and devoured, as the other corruptions of the earth are, by rooks and vermin.

Now nothing is more lamentable, than that the corruption of the beſt things ſhould thus become the worſt. Learning is, without queſtion, of excellent uſe to ſociety, and contributes more to our well-being than any thing elſe in the world, except religion: foraſmuch as it tends at once to improve the underſtandings and the morals of mankind,

together with every useful and social art; and, in consequence of these, to direct and bless their lives. And therefore a man of learning (I mean of useful learning) is justly a character of great esteem in the world, because it is of excellent use: but then it is a character, which, rightly considered, tends much more to inspire humility than conceit; forasmuch as it brings men into a clearer sight of their own infirmities and corruptions, and discovers that vast extent of human ignorance, which the unthinking part of the world are utterly unacquainted with. It teacheth them, that every point of matter is too big for their utmost researches. The air we breathe, the light of the sun, and the dust we tread upon, all equally confound their inquiries; their own being, most of all: the nature of the soul and body; the alliance of such opposites; the cohesion of the parts of matter, amazing and inscrutable to the wisest of mortals; neither can he say, why he doth not moulder into dust, why he doth not crumble into the original of his being, even whilst he is meditating upon it: and therefore nothing but the last degree of ignorance,

norance, ignorance of our own wants and weakneſs, can be a juſt, I mean, a tolerable, excuſe of vanity. But, however, if men of learning will be preferred to others; if they will be more honourable, let them be more uſeful: let them anſwer the ends of their learning; let them do more good to mankind than other mortals; and then let them reap that eſteem which is the juſt and natural reward of beneficence.

Another cauſe of pride is Wealth. Now wealth is honourable, on account of the power that attends it; I mean, the power of doing good: for, if this power be well directed, it is great and godlike; but if it be either unemployed or employed to evil purpoſes, to defraud, and to oppreſs, it is then, in the firſt caſe uſeleſs, and, in the latter, deteſtable and deviliſh. And indeed it is neither wealth, nor power, nor knowlege, that are in themſelves honourable: no; it is the virtue that conducts and diſpoſes of them to the good of mankind. And therefore *Ariſtotle* rightly obſerves, in the 4th Book of his *Ethics*, that *in truth the good man alone is honourable; but if fortune be added*

to his virtue, then he is more ſo. Whereas they that have the fortune without the virtue, become inſolent and contumelious, and would be deemed honourable, although they do none of thoſe things that render men really ſo, but quite contrary. As wealth, when joined with virtue, is really honourable; it becomes yet more ſo, when it is the effect of honeſty and virtuous induſtry; for then it is honourable, both in its origin, and its uſe: and yet, even then, GOD knows, it is no juſt foundation for Pride; becauſe both the abilities that acquired it, and the good diſpoſitions to make a right uſe of it, were both the bleſſings of Almighty GOD upon us. For *who maketh thee, oh man, to differ from another? and what haſt thou that thou didſt not receive? Now, if thou didſt receive it, why doſt thou glory as if thou hadſt not received it?* And therefore we have infinitely more reaſon to be ſolicitous how to diſcharge our duty in the ſtewardſhip of a great fortune, than to be vain for being employed in it: but if our wealth ſhould be found to be the effect of villainy, and evil arts (as it often is raiſed without any one good

good quality, and from the union of a great many evil), and ſhould alſo be employed as it was acquired, to injury, and to oppreſſion, then it is doubly infamous, and ſerves only to complete the moſt hateful character, the moſt deteſtable monſter among mankind, a great wealthy villain! and therefore nothing can be more fooliſh or unjuſt than Pride that is founded upon ſuch a title.

I might mention here, among the other occaſions of Pride, beauty, ſtrength, and other endowments of the body; but theſe are ſo caſual and tranſient, and, generally ſpeaking, of ſuch little conſequence to any good purpoſe of life, that they are ſcarce worth mentioning; at leaſt, ſince they are ſuch very vain and periſhing poſſeſſions, ſurely we may ſay of them, as the wiſe man doth of riches: *Wilt thou ſet thine eyes upon that which is not?* And therefore whoever pride themſelves upon any of theſe, are emphatically fooliſh: and the only wiſe conduct they that enjoy theſe little temporary advantages can poſſibly fall into, is this, that, whilſt nature continues to adorn their bodies, they apply all their diligence to imbeliſh and improve

improve their minds, that ſo they may be ſtored with a ſucceſſion of graces; which (when their outward form fails) will continue to render them always agreeable.

The laſt ſort of Pride that I ſhall mention is, the Pride of anceſtors; and this is, of all others the moſt fooliſh and ill founded. And indeed, it is aſtoniſhing how any man that thinks ſhould ever take it into his head to imagine that there is any merit in being born; for this is really the caſe, in relation to the pride of birth: and it is ſo very abſurd, that it is no wonder if, in the far greater part of the world, nobility is made perſonal; and nothing but a man's own merit, can intitle him to any degree of diſtinction and regard.

It is true there is a preſumption of generous principles and inclinations, in the iſſue of a great and good man, as of generous fruit from the ſcion of a generous ſtock: but if this fail, as it too often doth, ſurely the virtues we had no ſhare in, cannot poſſibly make any part of our praiſe, unleſs the ſtupid offſpring of great benefactors to mankind be reverenced, like their ſtatues, on account of

ſome

ſome outward reſemblance. And therefore let the worthleſs iſſue of great men remember, that, although the titles of their fathers deſcend to them, yet if thoſe talents and diſpoſitions, which ennobled theſe titles, do not accompany them, their quality is in truth a much greater reproach than recommendation to them. Worthleſs men, that pride themſelves upon the merit of their anceſtors, would do well to reflect what merit the head of gold gave to the brazen thighs and clayey feet of *Nebuchadnezzar*'s image. Nay, even acquired nobility, which (if founded upon merit) is of all others the moſt honourable, ſhould take care to be endowed with humility, upon many accounts: I ſhall mention only two.

1*ſt*, Becauſe it hath attained its reward; and therefore ſhould acquieſce and be thankful, and in conſequence humble.

2*dly*, Becauſe treating his inferiors with Pride, is, in a man of that character, reproaching his own former condition.

And thus I have done with all the cauſes and occaſions of Pride; and ſhewn you how fooliſh and ill-founded it is in all its Pretences.

Let me obſerve to you, on this occaſion, That there were two inſtitutions, of Divine appointment, under the Moſaic diſpenſation, of admirable uſe to repreſs the human vanity, and humble the haughty heart before the throne of GOD.

The firſt of theſe is to be found in the 23d chapter of *Leviticus*, at the 26th and following verſes. It was a day of ſolemn and univerſal humiliation annually appointed to the people of *Iſrael*, for afflicting their ſouls, and making an atonement for their ſins; under this dreadful denunciation upon every ſoul that profaned or neglected the obſervance of it; that he ſhould *be cut off from his people. And the* LORD *ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying; Alſo on the tenth day of this ſeventh month, there ſhall be a day of atonement: it ſhall be an holy convocation unto you. And ye ſhall afflict your ſouls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the* LORD. *And ye ſhall do no work in that ſame day, for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the* LORD *your* GOD. *For whatſoever ſoul it ſhall be that ſhall not be afflicted in that ſame day, he ſhall be cut*

off

off from among his people: and whatſoever ſoul it be that doth any work on that ſame day, the ſame ſoul will I deſtroy from among his people. He then adds, that this ſhall be an inſtitution of perpetual obſervance; *a ſtatute for ever throughout your generations, in all your dwellings:* and that this humiliation was to begin on the eve of the ninth day, and continue till the eve of the tenth.

To this day of ſolemn, national humiliation among the *Jews*, hath ſucceeded the firſt day of *Lent*, in the Chriſtian inſtitution: a day as utterly diſregarded among many Chriſtians, and by ſome even of the moſt ſerious and exalted Chriſtian characters, as if the obſervance of it were founded on no authority of GOD, or inſtitution of infinite wiſdom, or pure and primitive Chriſtian piety. GOD of his infinite mercy amend us, and deliver us from the guilt and horror of this profane, unhallowed ſpirit, which is gone out amongſt us!

The next inſtitution of Divine appointment, and of excellent uſe to humble the haughty heart of man, is to be found in the 26th chapter of *Deuteronomy*, at the firſt

and following verſes. The ordinance was this; When the *Iſraelites* were ſettled in the land which GOD had promiſed to their fathers, they were each of them obliged to bring an annual offering of their firſt-fruits unto the place that he ſhould chuſe; and when the prieſt had placed them before the altar, they were to humble themſelves before GOD, recounting the diſtreſſes, the miſery, and captivity of their forefathers, and the mighty deliverances wrought for them by the hand of GOD, for which they now brought an humble offering of their firſt-fruits.——*A Syrian ready to periſh was my father, and he went down into Egypt, and ſojourned there with a few; and became there a nation, great, mighty and populous; and the Egyptians evil-intreated us, and afflicted us, and laid upon us hard bondage: And when we cried to the* LORD GOD *of our fathers, the* LORD *heard our voice, and looked on our affliction, and our labour, and on our oppreſſion: and the* LORD *brought us forth out of Egypt, with a mighty hand, and an outſtretched arm, and with great terribleneſs, and with ſigns, and with wonders;*

wonders; and he hath brought us into this place, and hath given us this land, a land that floweth with milk and honey: and now, behold! I have brought the first-fruits of the land, which thou, O LORD, *hast given me.*

Alas! my brethren, were we annually to recollect our origin, and the bleſſings beſtowed, and the deliverances wrought for us by the goodneſs and mercy of GOD; how many of us would be obliged to recollect and recognize our anceſtors, in terms of much greater and more mortifying humiliation than that of, *A Syrian ready to periſh was my father!* How many of us would be obliged to derive our pedigree from a much lower and meaner origin, from ſlaves and ſycophants, from robbers and murderers! in one word, from vice and villainy of every kind! and the beſt, the very beſt among the ſons of *Adam*, be obliged to cry out before the altar of GOD, *A ſinner* ready to periſh was my father; a vile miſcreant, enſlaved to Satan, and doom'd to eternal miſery, till thou, O GOD, didſt, in thine infinite mercy, interpoſe, to redeem him

him from final deſtruction, by the ſacrifice of thy bleſſed Son JESUS CHRIST, and exalt him into an heir of everlaſting ſalvation; for which we owe thee this our tribute of praiſe and thankſgiving, our annual, our hourly, our endleſs humiliation before thine altar.

After all that hath been ſaid on this ſubject, need I add, that Pride is the moſt unphiloſophical, as well as the moſt unchriſtian principle in human nature? Unwiſe it muſt be, foraſmuch as it never fails at once to multiply our defects, and inflame every other vice in our nature; and that too with this unhappy circumſtance, that, whilſt it hides them from ourſelves, it expoſes and doubles them to the reſt of the world. More than this, it multiplies the human infirmities, by miſtaking and obtruding them all for perfections. The proud man's effrontery is fortitude, his rudeneſs is ſincerity, his loud laugh, wit, and his ſupercilious dulneſs, wiſdom: and certainly there cannot be a more fooliſh or unphiloſophic principle in human nature, than that which at once multiplies the

the poſſeſſor's infirmities, and hides them from himſelf.

But, alas! if this were all, it were to be endured. The moſt dreadful character of Pride is, that it is utterly unchriſtian. It is the direct contradiction to the Chriſtian virtue of humility: and the ſame haughtineſs of heart, which carries men to look down on their own ſpecies, too often lifts up their heads to heaven, and fights againſt GOD. There is not a more hateful character among men, than that of *Solomon*'s ſcorner; and of all ſcorners, the ſcorner of things ſacred is the moſt execrable.

Heaven-born humility inquires after divine truths with care; examines them with modeſty, and the deference due from a being confeſſedly imperfect and ſubordinate, to wiſdom infinite, unerring, and unſearchable; determines with candour, and ſubmits with reverence. Pride, mortal Pride, not inquires, but queſtions; not examines, but arraigns; not ſubmits, but decides; queſtions with arrogance, arraigns with effrontery, and decides with diſdain; faſti-

dious, unruly, ſelf-will'd, ſelf-ſufficient. O, my brethren, pray againſt Pride; pray earneſtly, without ceaſing, to that GOD who *reſiſteth the proud, but giveth grace to the lowly*; that he would ſubmit our ſouls, with humble reſignation, to the diſpenſations and declarations of his infinite wiſdom and goodneſs: abaſing ourſelves before him, obeying and adoring! *caſting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itſelf againſt* GOD, *and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of* CHRIST: beſeeching GOD, in the gentleneſs and meekneſs of JESUS CHRIST, that he would guard-that he would ſhield us from unchriſtian, antichriſtian Pride; that he would keep us ſtedfaſt in his holy faith and fear, *to do juſtly, to love mercy, and*, above all, *to walk humbly with our* GOD.

Which he of his infinite mercy grant, thro' the merits and mediation of JESUS CHRIST.

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